

### Comments on Amended Claims

In paragraph 5 the examiner identifies a potential for confusion with respect to the at least one specific signal structures in claim 32. Clearly the invention defined in claim 32 would operate with one or more of such specific signal structures, and with the subsequent detection of any one (or more) of those specific signal structures at each of the plurality of USB device. Accordingly, claim 32 has been amended to refer to transmitting one or more first specific signal structures, monitoring for said one or more first specific signal structures, and generating local reference signals from at least of said first specific signal structures. For clarity, the step of generating or designating specific signal structures for transmission to the plurality of USB devices has been deleted, as this is redundant in view the use of the term "specific" signal structures. "Specific" is the equivalent of "specified" which is synonymous with "designated". "Generating or designating" does not restrict the claim, as specific signal structures must clearly be either generated or designated.

In addition, the preamble to step (a) of locking said plurality of local clocks has been deleted, as it also adds no limitation as it comprises steps that are all subsequently defined. (It will also be noted that specific signal structures has been amended to read first specific signal structures: this is to distinguish these signal structures from other specific signal structures defined later in the claim, as is discussed below).

In paragraph 6 the examiner points out that limitation "(b)" has no associated recitation. Rather than introducing one, all step numerations have been removed from claim 1.

In paragraph 7 the examiner suggests that designating a master USB device in said USB tree requires clarification, and kindly suggests an alternative wording. The examiner's suggestion has largely been adopted, though the phrase one of said plurality of USB devices has been replaced with a USB device. This is because the master USB device can be either one of the plurality of USB devices to be synchronized or be an additional USB device (i.e. not one of the plurality of USB devices); in either scenario it is, however, a part of the USB tree. This is why the claim as filed is not limited to either scenario: both are valid. To further clarify this point, a new claim 55 has been appended, defining that the method includes designating one of said plurality of said USB devices in said USB tree as said master USB device.

The examiner then points out that the term "traffic" is unclear. Indeed, in a later paragraph the examiner suggests that the term "traffic" clouds the subject matter being claimed. The applicant is grateful for this suggestion, and has amended the step of monitoring the traffic, etc, to instead refer to monitoring for said second specific signal structures and for specified response signals with said master USB device.

In paragraph 8 the examiner requests clarification of whether the specified signal structures are identical with the specific signal structures referred to earlier in the claim. Again, either can be the case, so the specification does not limit the specific and specified signal structures to be distinct or identical. However, to clarify the claim in this regard, references to the specific signal structures have been amended to refer to first specific signal structures, and references to the specified signal structures have been amended to refer to second specific signal structures (specific and specified having the same meaning). This clarifies that these signal structures are distinct, but—in some embodiments—may be identical. Indeed, this point is emphasized by the appending of a new dependent claim that is directed to the case in which the first and second specific signals structures are identical.

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Returning to claim 32, however, as with the first specific signal structures, one or more second specific signal structures may be transmitted to each of the USB devices, and the method includes monitoring for the one or more second specific signal structures, but the first event triggering signals may be generated from the decoding of at least one of the second specific signal structures. Claim 32 has been amended accordingly.

In addition, the step of generating or designating specified signal structures for transmission to said plurality of USB devices has been deleted as essentially redundant (cf. above).

In paragraph 9, the examiner suggests a clearer recitation of sub-steps (iii) and (iv). These kind suggestions have been adopted though, as discussed above, the specified signal structures has been amended to read one or more second specific signal structures.

In paragraph 10 the examiner points out that claim 32 seems to suggest that the response signals from the plurality of USB devices are different from the specified response signals in line 32, but that it is not clear whether the specifications supports such as distinction. Accordingly, the second reference to the response signals has been amended to refer to said specified response signals.

In paragraph 11, the examiner explains that the recitation appears to suggest a propagation time from the master USB device to the master USB device. This is correct, in those embodiments where the master USB device is one of the plurality of USB devices being synchronized according to the inventive method. Hence, the wording of the claim is correct and as intended. The examiner also points out that it is not clear how the propagation time is determined from the measured time interval, and that the specification appears to support that the propagation time is the measured time interval. Accordingly, and the respective steps of measuring respective time intervals, determining propagation times from the time intervals, then determining relative propagation times from propagation times have been condensed, in effect, to measuring respective time intervals and determining relative propagation times from the *time intervals*.

In paragraph 12 the examiner points out that limitation (ix) suggests that the reference USB device is not necessarily the same as the master USB device. This is indeed correct, which is why the claim is not limited to their being identical or distinct.

For clarification, however, a new claim 57 has been appended, directed to the case where the reference USB device is the master USB device.

In paragraphs 13 and 14 the examiner points out that the command sequences and the data sequences in claims 35 and 37 lack antecedent basis. These claims have been amended accordingly.

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